

**First Baptist Church  
Snyder, Oklahoma**

Church Bylaws

(Date Approved)

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## **Article I: Church Membership**

### **Section 1. General**

This is a sovereign Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

Membership in this church shall consist of all persons who have met the conditions for membership, as provided in Article I, Section 2, been approved by the congregation, and are listed on the membership roll.

### **Section 2. Candidacy**

Any person who desires may present themselves as a candidate for membership in this church. Persons desiring to present themselves for membership shall be required to complete an interview with the Senior Pastor (or in times that the church does not have a Senior Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons).

- (1) By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and Scriptural baptism (by immersion after a salvation decision), or
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and practice, or
- (3) By statement of prior conversion experience and Scriptural baptism, or
- (4) For Scriptural baptism from another denomination, or
- (5) By restoration as provided in Article I, Section 6.

In case of individuals under the age of 18, parents/guardians should be contacted before baptism or membership is considered.

A simple majority vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership. Any dissent shall be resolved according to Article I, Section 6 of these bylaws.

### **Section 3. Responsibilities of Active Members**

Desiring to be a responsible member of First Baptist Church, Snyder, Oklahoma, members should:

- (1) Be in basic agreement with the church's statement of faith and purpose.
- (2) Discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the church.,
- (3) Be diligent to live according to the statements of the church covenant.
- (4) Be faithful in attendance to regular worship services.
- (5) Become a student of the Word of God and of prayer.
- (6) Be committed to personal evangelism and discipleship.
- (7) Be committed to biblical stewardship of time, talents, tithes, and offerings.

#### **Section 4. Voting Responsibilities of Members**

Only active members of the church, 7th grade and above (youth ministry age), are entitled to vote on questions submitted in church business meetings. Those who are not actively attending and participating should abstain from voting. Members must be present to vote unless those who are homebound due to medical reasons or age or otherwise approved in advance by the Senior Pastor and/or Moderator due to travel or health reasons.

#### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) By death.
- (2) By transmittal letter to another church.
- (3) By disciplinary action of this church as provided in Article I, Section 6.
- (4) By personal request for name to be removed from church membership.
- (5) By joining another denomination.

Note: Letters of transmittal shall be granted only to other churches of like faith and practice.

#### **Section 6. Discipline**

It shall be the basic purpose of First Baptist Church, Snyder, Oklahoma, to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Senior Pastor, other members of the church pastoral staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Reconciliation rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Senior Pastor, pastoral staff, and deacons to resolve the problem in accordance with [Matthew 18:15-35](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1-13](#); [2 Corinthians 2:1-11](#).

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. If it is determined that the welfare of the church will be best served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude them may upon their request be restored to membership by the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, other pastoral staff, and deacons, and an affirmation vote of the church upon evidence of their repentance and reformation.

## **Article II: Church Officers and Ministry Committees and Teams**

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees and teams shall be members of the church.

### **Section 1. Ministerial Staff**

#### **a. Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He is the under-shepherd of the church in worship, evangelism, discipleship, and ministry. As such, he will lead the congregation, deacons, organizations, ministerial staff, and church staff to perform their tasks. He will be responsible to the church.

#### **b. Associate Pastor(s)**

Any Associate Pastor is responsible to help in the leading of the church to function as a New Testament church alongside the leadership of the Senior Pastor. He will serve as an under-shepherd of the church in a particular area, or areas, as assigned by the Senior Pastor and church body. He will be responsible to the church.

#### **c. Calling Ministerial Staff**

In the pursuit of new ministerial staff due to a vacancy, the church shall select a Pastor Search Team by secret ballot. This selection should take place during a business meeting, and each member present may write down up to five people they would like to see serve on this Search Team. Upon their availability and willingness, the five people receiving the largest number of recommendations will serve as the Search Team. The next three people who received the largest number of recommendations will serve as alternates.

The Pastor Search Team shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. If the Search Team agrees to recommend a candidate, he should be invited to visit our ministry field and investigate our church, while seeking the Lord's guidance in this important matter. If then the candidate believes he is called to our church, he should be invited to appear before the congregation on a regular Sunday morning worship service to preach in view of a call.

The election and calling of a pastor shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those members present being necessary for a call. After consideration of this vote the Pastor Search Team shall proceed with the call of the pastor. The pastor elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's dismissal action following the church's Personnel Handbook.

A pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

Upon the resignation of a pastor, a new pastor should be called according to the process as outlined above.

## **Section 2. Church Staff**

The church staff shall include both pastoral staff and non-pastoral staff members. Church staff will follow procedures and be accountable to the Personnel Handbook. The Senior Pastor in conjunction with the Personnel Committee and Deacon Body shall have the authority to recommend non-pastoral staff to the church and shall be employed by church action.

Any resignation or termination of church staff shall follow procedures as outlined in the Personnel Handbook.

## **Section 3. Deacon Ministry**

Following the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve the Senior Pastor and other pastoral staff in performing ministry tasks; proclaim the gospel to unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community, as possible; help in leading the church to achieve its mission.

The officers of the Deacon Body shall consist of the chairman and vice-chairman. These officers may be elected at the discretion of the Deacon Body.

There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon, a person who comes to the church from another church where he served as a deacon.

If the church desires to ordain additional deacons, the church will have the opportunity to write prospective names and submit them to the Senior Pastor or current Chairman of deacons. By leadership of the Senior Pastor, he and the deacons will evaluate each prospect based upon biblical qualifications. The men exemplifying the biblical qualifications will be counseled with by the Senior Pastor and/or the Chairman of deacons to determine their desire and calling. Those who are qualified and desire to serve will be submitted to the church for approval and/or ordination. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of members present is needed for ordination. The men approved will be trained by the Senior Pastor and deacons and will begin serving as active deacons immediately upon ordination.

Any deacon may be removed from office for a valid cause as it pertains to biblical morality and the Christian faith. Any deacon who is being considered for removal from office will be given a reasonable opportunity for defense in a meeting with the Deacon Body and Ministerial Staff. The deacon should not be present during the discussion and vote regarding his removal. In the unfortunate circumstance that the conclusion is that a deacon should be removed, the Ministerial Staff and Deacon Body should present a suitable recommendation during a special called business meeting for church action to finalize the removal of the deacon.

Any deacon who faithfully served for ten or more years in their office and who have, because of age or disability may be elected Deacon Emeritus by a simple majority at any business meeting. This title should be only at the deacon's own request, and he may participate in the serving of the Lord's Supper and attend any regular deacon's meeting, but he shall not have any active status rights.

#### **Section 4. Moderator**

The Moderator shall be the Chairman of Deacons.

#### **Section 5. Church Clerk**

The Church Clerk will be elected annually by recommendation of the Nominating Committee. It is encouraged that the Church Clerk remain in office for the sake of continuity, if possible. The Church Clerk keeps a careful and correct record of all official acts of the church and perform futures pertaining to the office. The clerk shall receive reports in church business meetings, conduct correspondence with reference to granting and requesting letters, and be responsible for all church minutes and church actions as ordered by the church.

#### **Section 6. Treasurer**

The church shall approve a treasurer annually and can either be a third-party accounting firm or an individual church member, as recommended by the Nominating Committee with the help of the Finance Committee. This office requires oversight of responsibilities to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers, approved and signed by authorized personnel, monies, or things of value paid or given to the church, always keeping an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall make available such records as considered necessary by the Finance Committee.

#### **Section 7. Trustees**

The trustees (minimum of 2) shall be elected by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee each year. They will hold in trust the property of the church by having general oversight of legal affairs. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any real property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.

It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

Should a trustee be unable to complete the term of office, the Nominating Committee will provide qualified names for church consideration at a business meeting for a successor. In the case of unexpected vacancies of all trustees, the Chairman of Deacons and Vice-Chairman of Deacons will appoint replacements until the Nominating Committee is able to complete their responsibilities.

## **Section 8. Church Ministry Committees and Teams**

### **a. Church Ministry Committees**

Church Ministry Committees consists of elected individuals each year by the church who have received the trust of the church to make recommendations and decisions in their area of service. Each committee is still responsible to the church.

Excluding the Committee on Committees and Personnel Committee, which are recommended by the Deacons, along with the help of the Senior Pastor, to the church for approval, every other committee is recommended by the Committee on Committees to the church for approval.

Each committee should have a minimum of three members and a chairperson.

It is recommended that no one serve on both the Committee on Committees and Nominating Committee at the same time.

Each committee may give a report, if needed, on business conducted, pending, or recommended.

Church Ministry Committees Include:

- 1) Committee on Committees
- 2) Nominating Committee
- 3) Personnel Committee
- 4) Finance Committee
- 5) Counting Committee
- 6) Camps Committee
- 7) Membership Committee
- 8) Properties Committee

### **Committee on Committees Responsibilities:**

Recommended by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Body to the church for approval. Their first responsibility is to present recommendations for a Nominating Committee. Their next responsibility is to present recommendations for the remaining Church Ministry Committees before September.

### **Nominating Committee Responsibilities:**

Their first responsibility is to present recommendations for the office of Sunday School Director(s), who then may serve on the Nominating Committee. Their second responsibility includes recommending individuals who can fill the role of Team Leader on each Church Ministry Team. Their third responsibility is to recommend individuals to fill various roles and organizations in the church. This committee should complete their recommendations before September.



**Personnel Committee Responsibilities:**

Their primary responsibility is to help make sure that the policies and procedures of the Employee Handbook are being adhered to. In addition, their responsible for working closely with employees to ensure that each employee has a job description and understands the lines of supervision and work assignments. Job descriptions should be reviewed annually and updated if any changes occur. In addition, their responsible for working closely with the Church Finance Committee each year to develop and recommend any salary and benefits changes if needed.

**Finance Committee Responsibilities:**

Their primary responsibility is to be knowledgeable of current financial realities of the church. They make recommendations, as needed, to the church about anything that relates to finances throughout the year. They are responsible for working closely with Church Staff and Church Committees in the preparation of the proposed operating budget for the upcoming calendar year. The proposed operating budget should be recommended to the church before December 31.

**Counting Committee Responsibilities:**

Their first responsibility is to count any offering that may be taken up on behalf of the church. They are also responsible for counting any ballots that are cast during regular or special business meetings. They are also responsible for overseeing the communication of offerings with the assigned Church Treasurer and for depositing all offerings. Anytime that counting is taking place, there must be at least three Counting Committee members present.

**Church Camp Committee Responsibilities:**

They work closely with Ministerial and Church Staff in many ways for camp. They help with organizing and overseeing the food, lodging, and transportation details for their camps, as needed. They also may help with identifying individuals who can be sponsors and cooks for their respective camps, as needed. If possible, they should prioritize sponsors and cooks who will do their best to be a Christlike influence on campers and are actively involved in the life of our church through weekly worship gatherings. Those individuals who are willing to serve at camp as a sponsor or cook must be willing to adhere to all camp policies, have a background check, and take part in any training made available in an effort to provide the safest environment possible for the kids God has entrusted to our care.

**Membership Committee Responsibilities:**

They should work closely with Ministerial and Church Staff in order to recommend policies on church membership. They should review the membership roll each year to make sure that the membership list is as correct as possible.

**Properties Committee Responsibilities:**

Their primary responsibility is for the maintenance of church equipment and property. They should bring any maintenance, repair, or updates to the church; however, it is not necessary in case of an unforeseen emergency. They should work closely with Ministerial and Church Staff in identifying areas of needed service. They should also work closely with Ministerial and Church Staff on any requests for church facility or property use. They should be knowledgeable of the policies and procedures handbook for church building use.

## **b. Church Ministry Teams**

Church Ministry Teams consists of elected Team Leaders each year by the church who have been recommended by the Nominating Committee and have received the trust of the church to serve, recommend, and initiate ministry opportunities. Ministry teams also include other willing people who believe they are called to areas of ministry and will serve within the overall vision of the ministry team set forth by the ministerial staff, the church, and Team Leader. The church will have opportunities to sign up under areas of interest, and the elected Team Leaders will help in enlisting their teams and provide a list of team members to the church for approval.

Church Ministry Teams Include:

- 1) Baptism Ministry Team
- 2) Benevolence Ministry Team
- 3) Bereavement Ministry Team
- 4) Discipleship Ministry Team
- 5) Kid's Ministry Team
- 6) Fellowship Ministry Team
- 7) Missions Ministry Team
- 8) Music & Media Ministry Team
- 9) Youth Ministry Team
- 10) Welcoming Ministry Team

### **Baptism Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps the Ministerial Staff in preparing for and administering the ordinance of baptism. They make sure that all equipment and supplies are ready and meet with the candidates at the designated time by the Ministerial Staff and show candidates their dressing rooms. Females help female candidates and males help male candidates.

### **Benevolence Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps in meeting physical needs i.e., groceries, clothing, transportation, lodging, and utilities. The limits for help are dependent on the wisdom of the team, ministerial staff, and the church budget available for benevolence.

### **Bereavement Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps organize and oversee funeral meals that take place at the church building.

### **Discipleship Team Responsibilities:**

This team works closely with the Ministerial Staff in establishing and pursuing a pathway of Christian growth for all ages. They will help with the teaching and facilitating of Sunday School groups and any other designated times of discipleship.

### **Kid's Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps with organizing and overseeing ministry events and activities for newborns up through the sixth grade. Every team member must be willing to have a background check and take part in any training made available in an effort to provide the safest environment possible for the kids that God has entrusted to our care.

**Fellowship Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps with organizing and overseeing events and fellowships for the church.

**Missions Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps with initiating outreach opportunities and providing organization and oversight to efforts made in our community and beyond.

**Music & Media Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps with the weekly operation, maintenance, and overall quality of the music and media ministry. They will work closely with the ministerial staff.

**Youth Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps assist any ministerial staff in organizing and overseeing ministry events and activities for those in the seventh through twelfth grade. Every team member must be willing to have a background check and take part in any training made available in an effort to provide the safest environment possible for the youth that God has entrusted to our care.

**Welcoming Team Responsibilities:**

This team helps with organizing and overseeing the first impressions of those attending worship services. Making members and guests feel welcomed is a primary goal for this team.

**Article III: Church Meetings****Section 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly at least each Sunday morning for fellowship, encouragement, instruction, preaching, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. Any other church meetings, which will be essential in the promotion of the goals of the church, should be placed on the church calendar. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people.

**Section 2. Members Meetings**

The business of the church shall follow the Robert's Rules of Order and be kept in order by the moderator. Any member has the right to speak at a meeting after being recognized by the moderator. The church membership present shall constitute a quorum to vote and transact business on behalf of the church. A majority vote is needed to pass any motion other than items related to Article II.

The business of the church shall be conducted through two types of meetings:

- (1) The church will assemble at least quarterly to hear reports, conduct miscellaneous business as needed, and approve the budget for the coming year.

- (2) The church will assemble for special meetings upon the request of the Senior Pastor, Deacon Body, or Trustees. Also, any church member can submit a request to the Senior Pastor or Deacon Body for a special called meeting. Special called meetings should be announced at least one week prior to the meeting through the pulpit and any church publications. On rare occasions an emergency may arise making the one week notice impractical.

### **Section 3. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on January 1 and end December 31.

## **Article IV: Ordinances**

### **Section 1. Baptism**

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith and desires to profess Him publicly will indicate their commitment to Jesus Christ through baptism.

- (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (2) Baptism shall be administered by the Senior Pastor or whomever the Senior Pastor and/or the Deacon Body authorizes.
- (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any service called for that purpose.

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby Christians partake of the bread and fruit of the vine, to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and expect His second coming.

- (1) The Lord's Supper should be observed as frequently as desired under the discretion of the Senior Pastor, but at least quarterly. The Lord's Supper shall be observed during the Sunday morning worship service, or any other service deemed appropriate.
- (2) The Senior Pastor and deacons shall handle the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- (3) The deacons shall handle the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.

## **Article V: Designated Funds**

All donations accepted by the church will be allocated to the general fund unless it is designated to an established designated fund. Procedures for establishing designated funds will be under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and the Finance Committee. The Senior Pastor, Finance Committee, and Counting Committee shall have the right to discern if any designated donation does or does not qualify under an established designated fund. In times that a donation does not qualify, the donation will be allocated to the general fund.

## **Article VI. Amendments**

It is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor to initiate a temporary (ad hoc) committee that is approved by the church, as needed, to review the constitution and bylaws, proposing any revisions or adjustments necessary to maintain their effectiveness, and to bring these changes to the church during a scheduled members' meeting.

New bylaws may be adopted, or existing bylaws may be amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast at a meeting called for such purpose.

The church shall be given two weeks advance notice of the time of such meeting through the pulpit and any church publications. Further, a copy of proposed changes shall be made available to the church at two consecutive weeks of Sunday morning worship services in advance of the meeting.